BRITISH COLUMBIA | BC Stats

Infoline

Contact bcstats.infoline@gov.bc.ca Issue: 12-34 August 24th, 2012

- **Retail sales decline 1.0% in June; wholesale sales flat (+0.0%)**
- **July housing starts down 28.6%**
- **Fewer (-0.7%) British Columbians received EI benefits in June**

The Economy

- **Total housing starts in British Columbia slumped 28.6% (*seasonally adjusted*) in July.** The drop-off was the result of a decline in levels of new residential projects in BC's urban centres (-29.2%), namely for multiple-dwelling buildings (-38.1%). The number of single-detached homes climbed 5.8%.

  Canadian housing starts fell 6.1% in July, erasing the gain registered in the previous month. Lower numbers of starts in Saskatchewan (-31.2%), Alberta (-7.1%) and BC contributed the most to the decrease at the national level. *Data Source: CMHC*

- **Retailers in the province had a slower month in June as sales slipped 1.0% (*seasonally adjusted*), following an uneventful May (+0.0%).**

  Canadian sales painted a similar picture, edging down 0.4%, after registering a 0.2% climb in the previous month. At the national level, lower sales at gasoline stations (-1.3%), general merchandise (-1.5%) and building & garden supplies (-2.1%) stores helped offset strength in other major industry groups. Retailers in most provinces posted losses, ranging from 0.3% in Ontario to 3.4% in Nova Scotia. Quebec, Manitoba and Saskatchewan were the only provinces to record gains in June. *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

- **Wholesale sales fell flat in June (+0.0% *seasonally adjusted*), ending two consecutive months of gains.** Canadian sales inched down (-0.1%), with only two provinces recording increases in wholesaling activities. A 1.2% boost in Ontario helped to moderate the overall decline. *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

- **The number of Employment Insurance (EI) claimants receiving regular benefits in British Columbia declined 0.7% (*seasonally adjusted*) in June.** At the national level, an estimated 507,570 Canadians received regular EI benefits, 0.9% fewer than in May. The largest drop in the number of beneficiaries was registered in Nova Scotia (-2.0%), while PEI (+3.7%) saw a sharp increase in the number of beneficiaries.

  Compared to June of 2011, the number of recipients of regular benefits in BC has dropped 13.0%, similar to the decline seen nationwide (-11.1%) over the same period. *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

- **In the peak summer month of July, Vancouver International Airport (YVR) was the second-busiest airport in the country, after Toronto's Pearson Airport.** Precisely 29,226 (+0.5% from July 2011) aircraft took off or landed in Vancouver, compared to 38,894 in Toronto. The third-busiest airport was Calgary International, with 21,502 aircraft arrivals and departures. Canada's 42 largest airports (with NAV CANADA air traffic control towers) reported 445,572 aircraft take-offs and landings in July, nearly unchanged (+0.1%) from July of 2011. Interestingly, YVR's busiest day in July was recorded on Thursday the 19th, when close to 1,050 aircraft took off or landed at the airport. *Data Source: Transport Canada*

- **As fuel prices continue to fluctuate, Canadians are taking more trips on urban transit**

Report — No report this issue

Did you know...

Over half (55%) of Canadian parents agree (13% strongly/42% somewhat) that morning is the most stressful time of the day with their family. *Source: Ipsos Canada*

systems. In July, combined ridership on the country's ten largest urban transit systems (accounting for 80% of total urban transit in Canada) was notably higher (+1.6%) than in the same month last year. Approximately 139 million passenger trips were taken on these systems, generating $269 million in revenue, a significant increase (+4.7%) over July of 2011. *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

Tourism

- **Visitor entries into Canada via BC were flat (+0.0%, *seasonally adjusted*) in June.** Fewer Americans (-0.4%) crossed the border, as same-day (-3.0%) entries eased, offsetting a moderate increase in overnight travellers (+1.2%). However, June saw more visitors come to BC from overseas locations (+1.3%), mainly as a result of an increase in travellers from Asia (+2.1%). European entries continued on a downward trend (-5.5%), registering the fifth decrease of 2012, but visits from other international locations were up a solid 3.0% in June.

  Nationally, visitor entries to Canada were up (+0.5%) from the previous month, as both US (+0.4%) and non-US (+0.8%) visits rose. Quebec (+0.9%) and Ontario (+0.7%) carried a large share of this cross-border influx.

  Data Source: Statistics Canada

Second Quarter in Review

- **Retail sales inched down 0.4% (*seasonally adjusted*) in the second quarter, reversing a moderately positive (+0.4%) first-quarter performance.** Declining sales at electronics & appliance stores and gasoline stations appear to have exerted the strongest downward pressure. However, the province's rate of decrease was slightly slower than the national average (-0.5%), which was pulled down primarily by weaker sales in Quebec (-0.9%) and Ontario (-0.8%). *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

- **Wholesale sales in BC picked up (+2.8%, *seasonally adjusted*) in the second quarter, following a lacklustre first quarter (-0.6%).** With the exception of PEI (-4.9%) and Newfoundland & Labrador (-5.6%), sales were up in all provinces, increasing 2.9% nationally.

  Data Source: Statistics Canada

Older Workers

- **Older unemployed Canadians (aged 55 to 64) have different job-search techniques and face different challenges than their younger counterparts.** In the 2006 to 2010 period, one-in-five job-seekers aged 55 to 64 reported having mainly "looked at job ads" during their search for employment, twice the proportion for those 20 to 34. Conversely, only 18% of older unemployed listed using the Internet as their main job-search method, compared to 23% of those aged 20 to 34.

  Regardless of age, a large share of unemployed Canadians stated that they would be willing to accept a position if the wage offered were 10% lower than that of their previous job. However, for the older unemployed, this proportion was substantially higher. For the unemployed age 20 to 34, the probability of being willing to accept such job offers was 69%, compared to 81% for those 55 to 64.

  Many older unemployed individuals were also somewhat pessimistic about their chances of finding work in the near future. Less than a third (30%) of those aged 20 to 34 felt that their chances were "not very good," compared to 58% of those 55 to 64. A quarter (25%) of older Canadians felt that better health or being younger would help most in finding a job, while many were also interested in acquiring new skills and getting assistance in finding a job. *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

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For data originating from Statistics Canada, data sourced to 'Statistics Canada' has been retrieved from CANSIM, the agency's electronic database; otherwise the source is identified as 'SC' plus the catalogue number.

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BC at a glance . . .

POPULATION (thousands)	Apr 1/2012	% change on one year ago
BC	4,606.5	1.0
Canada	34,755.6	1.1
GDP and INCOME (Released Nov 8)		
(BC - at market prices)	2010	% change on one year ago
Gross Domestic Product (GDP) *($ millions)*	203,147	5.9
GDP *($ 2002 millions)*	167,140	3.0
GDP *($ 2002 per Capita) (reflects revised pop)*	36,899	1.4
Personal Disposable Income *($ 2002 per Capita)*	26,166	2.2
TRADE ($ millions, seasonally adjusted)		% change on prev. month
Manufacturing Shipments - Jun 2012	3,198	0.0
Merchandise Exports - Jun 2012	2,581	-0.5
Retail Sales - Jun 2012	5,089	-1.0
CONSUMER PRICE INDEX	% change on	12-month avg
(all items - Jul 2012)	one year ago	% change
BC	1.1	1.8
Vancouver	1.4	1.9
Victoria	1.0	1.6
Canada	1.3	2.3
LABOUR FORCE (thousands)		
(seasonally adjusted)	Jul 2012	% change on prev. month
Jobs Created (-Lost) - BC	-14.5	
Labour Force - BC	2,480.1	-0.2
Employed - BC	2,307.7	-0.6
Unemployed - BC	172.4	5.4
		Jun 2012
Unemployment Rate - BC *(percent)*	7.0	6.6
Unemployment Rate - Canada *(percent)*	7.3	7.2
INTEREST RATES (percent)	Aug 22/2012	Aug 24/2011
Prime Business Rate	3.00	3.00
Conventional Mortgages - 1 year	3.10	3.50
- 5 year	5.24	5.39
US-CANADA EXCHANGE RATE	Aug 22/2012	Aug 24/2011
(avg. noon spot rate) Cdn $ per US $	0.9929	0.9880
(closing rate) US $ per Cdn $	1.0087	1.0136
AVERAGE WEEKLY WAGE RATE		
(industrial aggregate - dollars)	Jul 2012	% change on one year ago
BC	848.01	1.7
Canada	867.33	4.0

SOURCES:

Population, Gross Domestic Product, Trade, Prices, Labour Force, Wage Rate } Statistics Canada

Interest Rates, Exchange Rates: Bank of Canada Weekly Financial Statistics

For latest Weekly Financial Statistics see www.bankofcanada.ca

Solid Waste Generation Forecast

This report highlights three projection scenarios with varying degrees of measures taken to divert waste from British Columbia landfills. The report includes a summary of the methodology and the results of the forecast for each scenario from 2010 through 2025. Read this at:
http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/StatisticsBySubject/EnvironmentalStatistics/Analysis.aspx

Census 2011 Fast Facts

The age-sex data from the 2011 Census have been released. For the first time, since reporting began, persons 65 years of age and older outnumbered 0 to 14 year-olds in BC. See more:
http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/StatisticsBySubject/Census/2011Census.aspx

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https://twitter.com/#!/bcstats

New RSS Feeds From BC Stats

BC Stats has published several new RSS feeds:
http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/Help/RSSFeeds.aspx

The 2011 National Household Survey

Release dates have been set as:

May 8, 2013
- Immigration; Citizenship; Place of birth; Language; Ethnic origin; Visible minorities; Religion; Aboriginal Peoples

June 26, 2013
- Labour; Education; Place of work; Commuting to work; Mobility and migration; Language of work

August 14, 2013
- Income; Earnings; Housing; Shelter costs

http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/nhs-enm/index-eng.cfm

Released this week by BC Stats

- No periodicals

Released next week

- Business Indicators, August 2012

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